

Section 3
**Other
Consequences
of Growth**

7.0 The Social and Economic Consequences of Urban Growth

The main purpose of the technical chapters of the Planned Growth Strategy, Part 1 – Findings Report is to document the financial costs and benefits associated with alternative development patterns in the Albuquerque metropolitan area. As citizens review and evaluate the merits of implementing the Planned Growth Strategy proposals, it is important to take into consideration other topics and issues that relate to the area’s future that cannot be measured in dollars. They relate to quality of life, aesthetics, personal safety, sense of community, and the natural environment, to name a few.

In this chapter of the report, we offer a list of these issues and conditions (Table 97). We describe in a general way the impacts of these topics or issues, making clear how they may affect citizens here and elsewhere today. Next, we briefly describe the extent to which these conditions apply or exist in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. Lastly, we discuss the ways in which the Planned Growth Strategy may mitigate some of the adverse conditions and reinforce and sustain favorable ones.

Table 97 Summary of Other Asserted Social and Economic Benefits and Costs

| Benefit | Cost |
|---|--|
| Range of housing choices | Loss of agriculture lands and reduced farm productivity |
| Personal open space | Adverse impact on unique/fragile lands and public open space |
| Low-density living | Negative visual impact |
| Lower crime rates | Increased water consumption |
| Positive visual impact | Reduced access to recreational facilities |
| Lower housing prices | Weakened sense of community |
| Better school quality | Exclusion or exclusivity |
| Consumer choice among government services | Segregation of jobs and housing |
| | Higher energy consumption and increased air pollution. |
| | Inner city deterioration |
| | “Leap-frog” development |

This last factor is important because the general statements of benefits and problems associated with urban growth may not be directly related to Planned Growth Strategy recommendations. This approach does involve, however, introducing at this point some of the findings and recommendations of the Planned Growth Strategy, Part 2 – Preferred Alternative report. These findings and recommendations are presented in a very summary way below. The reader is referred to Section 1 Preferred Alternative and Section 2 Implementation of the Part 2 report for a complete discussion.

The City/County Comprehensive Plan policies that address the subject are also included. In some instances, the Comprehensive Plan does not contain a policy related directly to the topic.

The general conditions reported here have been identified in a major national study, *The Costs of Sprawl Revisited*, published in 1999 by the National Academy Press. Parsons Brinckerhoff staff made a significant contribution to this national report.

The discussion that follows rounds out the fiscal emphasis elsewhere in the Planned Growth Strategy, Part 1 – Findings Report. The discussion acknowledges that urban development patterns clearly have benefits as well as costs. One person’s asset is another’s liability. In all, this chapter documents a number of issues important to consider when developing a growth strategy, including the role that public policy can play in maintaining and enhancing the many aspects of quality of life valued by Albuquerque and Bernalillo County residents.

7.1 Assertions About Benefits

7.1.1 Range of Housing Choices, Personal Open Space, and Low-Density Living

General Description and Impacts

Many consumer preference surveys reveal that a key part of the “American Dream” is ownership of a detached, single-family home with attached private open space. That concept, put into practice on a large scale, leads to relatively low residential density throughout a metropolitan region. Consumers obviously value the choice to live in low-density areas, and most housing developers consistently build low-density subdivisions because they are easy to market.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Albuquerque’s housing development is predominantly low-density single family houses with attached private open space, although much of the recent entry-level housing has been built on lots smaller than allowed in the R-1 zone. The increasingly common R-LT zone allows a standard minimum lot size of 40 feet by 100 feet for a detached home as compared to the 50 feet by 100 feet minimum lot size required in the R-1 zone. The zone of RD for seven dwelling units per acre (which is common in the southwest quadrant of the city) allows an increase of two dwelling units over the standard R-1 density of five dwelling units per acre.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

While the Planned Growth Strategy recognizes that there are efficiencies to be gained through somewhat higher density development, it does not mandate higher density development. Rather, the Planned Growth Strategy suggests that development bear costs that reflect the actual costs for public infrastructure and other services. This differs from current practice in which tax and rate payers pay a significant part of the cost of all new development and lower-cost developments contribute to the public expense of higher cost developments. Density increases suggested in the Planned Growth Strategy area modest and reflect average densities in the 1960 City Limits. The Planned Growth Strategy supports livable older neighborhoods with urban quality of life, low crime rates, and good schools. Implementing the Planned Growth Strategy would create more areas of living choice, notably within the 1960 City Limits and in activity centers and transit-focused corridors.

Comprehensive Plan

Established & Developing Urban Areas. Policy e “New growth shall be accommodated through development in areas where vacant land is contiguous to existing or programmed urban facilities and services and where the integrity of existing neighborhoods can be ensured,” and Policy o “Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.”

7.1.2 Lower Crime Rates

General Description and Impacts

Most homeowners and businesses consider a low crime rate to be very important in their locational decisions and perceptions about their quality of life. A substantial amount of statistical evidence associates lower crime rates with lower density residential areas. Other research that looks closely at the causes of crime, however, finds that crime is overwhelmingly explained by demographic factors, such as income level, educational attainment, family status, and other social factors, and not by development patterns. Though there is an association between density and crime, there is no demonstrated causality between low-density development and low crime rates. Suburban residents perceive themselves to be safer than urban residents do, an important consideration.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Albuquerque’s crime rates do not appear to be based on density but rather on social and economic conditions. Since social and economic conditions that are related to the incidence of crime tend to characterize low-income neighborhoods, the incidence of crime is higher in these areas.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy vision can help to increase public safety by creating environments with “more eyes on the street” for more hours each day. Importantly, safety is related to perception as well as actual conditions. When public spaces (e.g., sidewalks, plazas) are not utilized, residents and visitors increasingly retreat into private indoor places, reinforcing negative perceptions of security and detracting from the community’s attractiveness. Positive redevelopment of mixed-use activity centers and corridors would increase security and the perception of it in several ways:

- A diverse mix of local land uses activates the public realm for more hours each day than single use districts, as local and regional residents are able to conveniently access jobs, shops, restaurants, entertainment (e.g., cinemas), and services (e.g., daycare). In short, activities and amenities that attract people create busier, safer places.
- The Planned Growth Strategy vision would make this rich mixture of land uses more accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users through careful attention to urban design. While local and regional auto traffic are also welcome, a higher percentage of local residents are likely to walk or bike, and more regional residents can access jobs and other routine needs by transit, putting relatively more human activity in the pedestrian realm.

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- Integrating residential development with other land uses and increasing the density of households within walking distance of transit means relatively more people are able to walk about the area during more hours of the day.

While good urban design is an important aspect of safe environments, other benefits of the Planned Growth Strategy Preferred Alternative—such as economic growth through better quality of life, access to regional jobs through expanded transit, and community renewal—can also contribute to mitigating some of the causes of crime. One might attempt to avoid crime by housing location choice, but crime rates in the community may remain high. Planned Growth Strategy is concerned with fostering the physical, community, and economic conditions that result in a lower crime rate. The Planned Growth Strategy encourages positive engagement in correcting local problems, such as crime, rather than the relocation from such problems.

Comprehensive Plan

Economic Development. Policy a “New employment opportunities which will accommodate a wide range of occupational skills and salary levels shall be encouraged and new jobs located convenient to areas of most need.”

7.1.3 Positive Visual Impact

General Description and Impacts

Low-density, higher-income communities often have more personal open space and attractive landscaping than higher density residential areas, and these features are considered by many people as more visually appealing than higher density areas.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

See comments above from “Range of Housing Choices...”

Comprehensive Plan

Developed Landscape. Policy section, particularly Policy a “The natural and visual environment, particularly features unique to Albuquerque, shall be respected as a significant determinant in development decisions.”

7.1.4 Lower Housing Prices

General Description and Impacts

Some research shows evidence that growth control measures restrict the supply of land and drive up land prices, thereby increasing the cost of housing to consumers.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Some Albuquerque developers opt to build in areas remote from the urban center in order to capitalize on lower land costs. One consequence of this pattern is that most families must have a car for each worker, negating some of the savings realized on a less expensive, albeit remotely located, home. The current system of providing infrastructure for new growth may be constraining land supply at present. Developed lot costs are higher in Albuquerque than in comparable surrounding metropolitan areas.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy Preferred Alternative is based on official population and employment forecasts. The Planned Growth Strategy does not attempt to reduce growth but to better provide for it and achieve outcomes that reflect public policies and preferences. The Growth Strategy recommends levels of expenditures for growth-related infrastructure that are consistent with these forecasts and, in some instances, are higher than current spending. In addition, more efficiently supporting urban growth through a management strategy results in less private and public spending to support the same amount of growth. The Planned Growth Strategy would start to create additional viable options, so families could choose to live in a denser urban environment, closer to the urban core, easily accessed by bus and walking as opposed to making every trip by automobile, thereby reducing private travel costs.

Comprehensive Plan

Housing. Policy a “The supply of affordable housing shall be preserved and increased and the opportunity to obtain standard housing for a reasonable proportion of income assured.”

7.1.5 Better School Quality

General Description and Impacts

Many households perceive that school quality in suburban locations is higher for an equivalent or lower public tax burden, and numerous studies confirm that households are willing to pay higher housing costs to access “good” schools. Like the incidence of crime, most studies find student performance highly correlated with income level, family status, and other sociodemographic variables. Thus, suburban schools may not be better per se, but rather, serve a different (higher income) student population than more centrally located schools.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

The Planned Growth Strategy study areas are served by one public schools system, the Albuquerque Public Schools. Costs do not vary by location. Student performance at outlying schools in Albuquerque does appear to exceed that of many inner-city schools. There are some notable exceptions at both the elementary and mid-school levels. School performance is strongly linked to the student’s motivation, instructor skills, and parent’s involvement in a child’s education, which factors can result in high achievement in any location.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy supports livable, older neighborhoods with good quality of life, low crime rates, and well-performing schools. As with crime, one might move to an area with schools where the average achievement level is higher, but educational achievement in the community may be unchanged. The Planned Growth Strategy is concerned with fostering the community and economic conditions that result in a higher educational achievement in all parts of the Albuquerque area. Rather than escape, the Planned Growth Strategy encourages positive engagement in correcting local problems, such as lower academic performance, rather than relocation from such problems.

7.1.6 Consumer Choice among Government Services

General Description and Impacts

Regionally dispersed development is associated with the proliferation and fragmentation of local governments, providing residents with more opportunities to match bundles of taxes and services to their personal preferences. By giving people stronger influence over conditions in their own localities, development dispersed to other outlying jurisdictions fosters self-government, democratic participation, and citizen control over local affairs. Both large centralized and fragmented governments offer opportunities to achieve economies of scale. Local governments may be able to economize by targeting services to a more homogenous group of residents; whereas, larger government can spread overhead and administrative costs over a larger constituency.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Within the Planned Growth Strategy study area, fragmentation of local government into many jurisdictions is not a predominant characteristic. This area does include Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, Paradise Hills, the City of Albuquerque, and the unincorporated portion of Bernalillo County. Though we do not have the same situation as metro Phoenix with multiple jurisdictions, we do have several “bundles” of services from which to choose.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy Preferred Alternative does not assume that there should be one standard of urban services or one tax structure or one vision for the future within the metropolitan area. The Planned Growth Strategy, Part 2 – Preferred Alternative report makes general recommendations that should be finalized through planning efforts within neighborhoods, Community Planning Areas, corridors, centers, and so on. These planning efforts will involve neighbors, developers, and other stakeholders. The Planned Growth Strategy implementation recommendations will result in more effective planning that will better reflect preferences within different parts of the metropolitan area. As such, a *variety* of well-functioning subareas is expected to result.

7.2 Assertions About Costs

7.2.1 Loss of Agricultural Lands and Reduced Farm Productivity

General Description and Impacts

Low intensity development removes land from productive farming uses. Both residential and commercial uses built at low densities require more land for the placement of structures. Widely dispersed development far from the edges of already developed areas renders intermediate and adjacent parcels less efficient for agricultural use, increasing development pressure. This encroaching development pressure and generally rising land values create incentives for agricultural landowners to sell to speculators and incentives for speculators to assemble and

sell large parcels of land.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

This trend is evident in the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County area, most notably in the North and South Valleys.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy emphasizes more efficient and compact development and redevelopment, likely reducing near-term pressure to urbanize agricultural land. The Planned Growth Strategy also recommends keeping growth rates in the County North Valley and South Valley at current levels and supports more intense development in areas that are more environmentally suitable for urban growth.

Comprehensive Plan

Rural. Policy section, particularly Policy d “Land which is suitable for agriculture shall be maintained to the extent feasible in agricultural production and discouraged from non-agricultural development.”

7.2.2 Adverse Impact on Unique/Fragile Lands and Public Open Space

General Description and Impacts

More environmentally fragile lands are harmed by traditional suburban development patterns than by more compact settlement patterns. Low-density, auto-oriented development inherently consumes more land, with a greater probability that fragile environmental lands will be converted to residential and other uses. At the same time, local governments sometimes misjudge the cumulative regional consequences of environmental degradation because they are not well connected in their development decision-making. Each can make incremental decisions for short-term local economic gain without realizing effects on other nearby jurisdictions or on the natural environment areawide.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Archeologically valuable areas are prevalent in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, as are environmentally fragile, high-desert lands. Both archaeologically and environmentally significant lands have been protected to a degree through the Open Space acquisition program. The Planned Growth Strategy, Part 1 – Findings Report indicates that the urban growth consumes approximately 1.5 square miles of land per year.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy Preferred Alternative would reduce the pace and extent of outward edge development that likely is detrimental to archaeological and environmental resources. The Planned Growth Strategy encourages the adoption of environmental standards within new developments that incorporate the natural landscape. The Planned Growth Strategy supports controlling development in “obsolete” and “premature” subdivisions where scattered growth has the potential to seriously degrade the landscape. Planned Growth Strategy advocates a proactive

approach to correcting sites with contamination problems so that they can become better-functioning assets to the community.

Comprehensive Plan

Developed Landscape. Policy section, particularly Policy a “The natural and visual environment, particularly features unique to Albuquerque, shall be respected as a significant determinant in development decisions.”

Open Space Network. Policy section, particularly Policy a “Open space lands and waters shall be acquired or regulated as appropriate to serve one or more of the following purposes: conservation of natural resources, provision of opportunities for outdoor education and recreation, shaping of urban form, conservation of archaeological resources, provision of trail corridors, and protection of the public from natural hazards,” and Policy f “A multi-purpose network of open areas and trail corridors along arroyos and appropriate ditches shall be created . . . [and] managed to protect natural features, views, drainage and other functions.”

7.2.3 Negative Visual Impact

General Description and Impacts

Usual development practices frequently bring housing and commercial development within the view shed of scenic resources, and the loss of open space and deterioration of dramatic landscapes may over time harm a region’s competitive ability to retain and attract workers. Many people prefer the visual qualities of compact urban development or the uniqueness of older neighborhoods to what they see as homogenous subdivision and strip mall architecture. A lack of civic spaces, landmark buildings, and pedestrian-scaled amenities detract from the quality of life.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

The mountains to the east, volcanoes and escarpment to the west, and panoramic views are important to Albuquerqueans; this preference is consistent with lower profile development that preserves outward views to geographic features.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy emphasizes a more visually pleasing urban environment. Building a more aesthetically enjoyable community as selected locations are redeveloped with higher intensity land uses is important. A more visually pleasing cityscape could reduce resistance to higher intensity development and encourage areas of economic vitality. The Planned Growth Strategy supports the policy recommendations in the West Side Strategic Plan and many other plans that encourage preservation of view corridors. More effective planning, resulting from Planned Growth Strategy implementation, will help protect view corridors.

Comprehensive Plan

Established & Developing Urban Areas. Policy m “Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.”

Also *Developed Landscape*. Policy section, particularly Policy a “The natural and visual environment, particularly features unique to Albuquerque, shall be respected as a significant determinant in development decisions.”

7.2.4 Increased Water Consumption

General Description and Impacts

Low-density growth patterns cause increases in demand for water by urban users. This is especially significant in the Southwest where water resources are scarce, sustained water shortages sometimes exist, and dry heat drives up evaporation.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Low-density single family detached development uses more water than higher density types of development, though Albuquerque has made significant reductions in water use through its conservation program. The water conservation ordinance limits to 20% the proportion of a new residential lot that can be in high-water landscaping.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

Compact development envisioned by the Planned Growth Strategy Preferred Alternative would improve water efficiency. The Planned Growth Strategy suggests that water impact fees might reflect the water consumption attributes of different housing types. This would provide a financial incentive for lower water use. Planned Growth Strategy supports use of xeriscape landscaping in design standards.

Comprehensive Plan

Established & Developing Urban Areas. Policy d “The location, density and design of new development shall respect . . . [environmental] carrying capacities, etc.”

7.2.5 Reduced Access to Recreational Facilities

General Description and Impacts

The provision of parks for public use by residents may be deficient in low-density areas near the fringe of the urban area.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Albuquerque’s low-density development has spread the population, and reaching developed park standards is a problem. Current financial limitations result in a backlog of park development in new growth areas. The conditions in some older neighborhoods contribute to declining populations in these areas. In turn, this makes inefficient use of existing parks.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

Achieving the Planned Growth Strategy Preferred Alternative would enable local government to make more efficient use of existing neighborhood parks by more families living closer to the parks, forestalling additional demand for parks at the urban edge. The Planned Growth Strategy recommends linking park improvements with development permitting, insuring that parks are available in a timely way to serve growth. The Planned Growth Strategy prioritizes providing adequate funding for park maintenance and rehabilitation.

Comprehensive Plan

Open Space. Policy h “Developing areas shall have neighborhood parks and open areas located to serve the population of the area.”

7.2.6 Weakened Sense of Community

General Description and Impacts

Linkages with neighbors are diminished because low residential density, heavy emphasis on car travel rather than foot travel, and a lack of neighborhood retail stores and other meeting places reduce interpersonal contacts and a sense of place. Linkages with other residents throughout the metropolitan region are also diminished by the diffusion of households and jobs throughout the metro area.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Albuquerque exhibits many of these characteristics.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

Implementing the Preferred Alternative can, over a period of time, create more compact and interactive mixed-use areas and community and village centers conducive to sociable behavior and a sense of community. The Planned Growth Strategy calls for fostering neighborhoods that exhibit shared values of inclusion in interesting and stimulating community life rather than exclusion. The Planned Growth Strategy supports the widespread adoption of community-based education within the Albuquerque Public Schools. This entails school facilities serving as community centers, addressing the needs of all community residents, and engaging the community and parents in the education of our youth.

Comprehensive Plan

Established & Developing Urban Areas. Policy i “Employment and service uses shall be located to complement residential areas,” and Policy j “Where new commercial development occurs, it should generally be located in existing commercially zoned areas as follows: In small neighborhood oriented centers provided with pedestrian and bicycle access within reasonable distance of residential areas for walking or bicycling.”

Also *Education.* Policy e “Variety and flexibility in educational and recreational resources shall be encouraged through joint use of facilities.”

7.2.7 Exclusion or Exclusivity

General Description and Impacts

Many low- and moderate-income households cannot afford low-density suburbs, and these households become disproportionately concentrated in central cities and older neighborhoods. Such neighborhoods often are characterized by housing that is older, smaller, less well-maintained, and functionally deficient. This concentration of lower income groups fosters conditions that give rise to social problems, such as crime, drug abuse, delinquency, unemployment, and mental illness.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Segregation in Albuquerque is de facto and more by income than by race or ethnic origin. Albuquerque does have relatively low-cost housing developments built recently at the city's edge.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy supports working to counter this trend through increased infill, redevelopment, and mixing of housing types and densities in new and existing neighborhoods. The result of implementing this recommendation should be a variety of households in different parts of the urban area.

7.2.8 Segregation of Jobs and Housing

General Description and Impacts

The segregation of housing and employment sites (and other land uses) in many communities is an important factor contributing to increases in vehicle miles of travel. Most dispersed, low-density developments are designed such that residents are required to travel longer distances by automobile to access work. Unlimited expansion of urban areas on the fringe also permits many employers to move to locations that are far from inner-city neighborhoods. Consequently, unemployed workers living in those neighborhoods can neither readily learn about job opportunities in outward locations nor afford to commute to such jobs even if they learn about and qualify for them. This mismatch aggravates higher rates of unemployment in centrally located areas and suburban shortages of unskilled workers.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

In Albuquerque, less than 8% of residential construction is occurring within the 1960 City Limits, while nearly 36% of non-residential construction (i.e., job-generating uses) is taking place in that area. At the same time, about 56% of residential construction is occurring in the urban area's outer ring, especially on the west side. Less than 30% of the non-residential construction is in the outer ring area. This contributes to longer work commutes. The second general trend, i.e., jobs moving to suburban locations, does not appear to be occurring as yet in Albuquerque as it has in other larger metropolitan areas. Retail and service jobs in new growth areas are weakly linked by transit to low-income neighborhoods.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

One of the main objectives of the Planned Growth Strategy Preferred Alternative is to increase housing starts in the 1960 City Limits and employment growth on the west side to better balance jobs and housing locations. The Planned Growth Strategy supports greatly expanded transit service and land use patterns that work well with transit. Implementing these recommendations will increase accessibility to employment locations.

Comprehensive Plan

Economic Development. Policy g "Concentrations of employment in activity centers should be promoted in an effort to balance jobs with housing and population in order to reduce the need to travel."

7.2.9 Higher Energy Consumption and Increased Air Pollution

General Description and Impacts

Dispersed, low-density development increases vehicle miles traveled and consumes more scarce energy, particularly imported oil, than more compact development. Low-density fringe development requires more travel overall, with most of this travel being by energy-inefficient autos rather than more efficient modes of mass transit. Tailpipe exhaust, gas vapors, air conditioning leakage, and dust and chemicals lifted from road surfaces all reduce air quality and affect public health.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Vehicle miles traveled per day in Albuquerque have increased steadily from 12 mpd in 1970 to about 23 mpd presently, with a corresponding increase in fuel use and emissions.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy recommends centers and corridors, new mixed-use neighborhoods at the fringe and better jobs-housing balance that support transit and alternative transportation modes that will gradually convert many trips to transit, walking, and bicycling, reduce the number of vehicular trips and their lengths, and positively affect fuel use and emissions.

Comprehensive Plan

Energy Management. Policy c "Land use planning that will maximize potential for efficient use of alternative and renewable energy sources shall be undertaken," and Policy d "A transportation system that is more energy efficient shall be developed. In particular, promote: a variety of transportation modes including expansion of transit, paratransit and railway systems"

Also *Air Quality.* Policy b "Automobile travel's adverse effects on air quality shall be reduced through a balanced land use/transportation system that promotes the efficient placement of housing, employment and services."

Also *Economic Development.* Policy g "Concentrations of employment in activity centers should be promoted in an effort to balance jobs with housing and population in order to reduce the need to travel."

7.2.10 Inner-City Deterioration

General Description and Impacts

Deteriorating inner-city conditions motivate many economically viable families and businesses to move farther out, and the same conditions discourage viable households and firms from moving into central areas in general. As a result, the economic and social condition of neighborhoods and businesses remaining in central areas deteriorates.

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Job-producing development is more prevalent in the 1960 City Limits than at the fringe. Nonetheless, many older commercial, office, and industrial areas are deteriorating in quality and competitiveness, and personal wealth is moving out of older neighborhoods to fringe developments in this and other jurisdictions in the region.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy emphasizes reinvesting in older parts of the urban area and reversing residential and commercial decline in many low income neighborhoods. Better quality of life (e.g., lower crime, better schools, services) in older neighborhoods will encourage more middle and upper income households to reside in these places, stimulate reinvestment in homes and businesses, and increase local economic activity and value.

Comprehensive Plan

Economic Development. Policy a “New employment opportunities which will accommodate a wide range of occupational skills and salary levels shall be encouraged and new jobs located convenient to areas of most need,” and *Established & Developing Urban Areas.* Policy o “Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.”

Also *Housing.* Policy b “Quality of existing housing improved through concentrated renovation programs in deteriorating neighborhoods.”

7.2.11 “Leap-Frog” Development

General Description and Impacts

“Leap-frog” development, which locates new urban growth at some distance from the existing urban fringe, does not capitalize on infrastructure capacity that may already be present in other areas. In addition, dispersed development increases costs for linearly related infrastructure (e.g., roads, water and sewer mains).

Prevalence in Albuquerque

Planned Communities in Comprehensive Plan Reserve and Rural areas, if development were to begin in less than 25 years, would constitute “leap-frog” growth. Existing no net cost policies, if adequately implemented, would off-set, to a degree, the financial consequences of such development. However, inadequate policies exist at present to control development between the Planned Communities and the urban edge. Such development, as presently regulated, would contribute to the problems identified.

How Affected by Planned Growth Strategy

The Planned Growth Strategy recommendations address this issue by defining “no net cost.” In addition, policies are recommended to control scattered site development in “obsolete” and “premature” subdivisions that are located between a proposed Planned Community and the urban edge. Implementing Planned Growth Strategy recommendations would prove to be an attraction for more people and jobs within the areas already served with urban infrastructure, re-energizing the economic health of older areas and increasing their contribution to gross receipts taxes. The Planned Growth

Strategy recommends that urban growth occur in the most cost effective way, that it, by using existing infrastructure capacity first.

Comprehensive Plan

Service Provision. Policy c “The existing public service area should be the highest priority for service, capacity, use, maintenance and rehabilitation.”